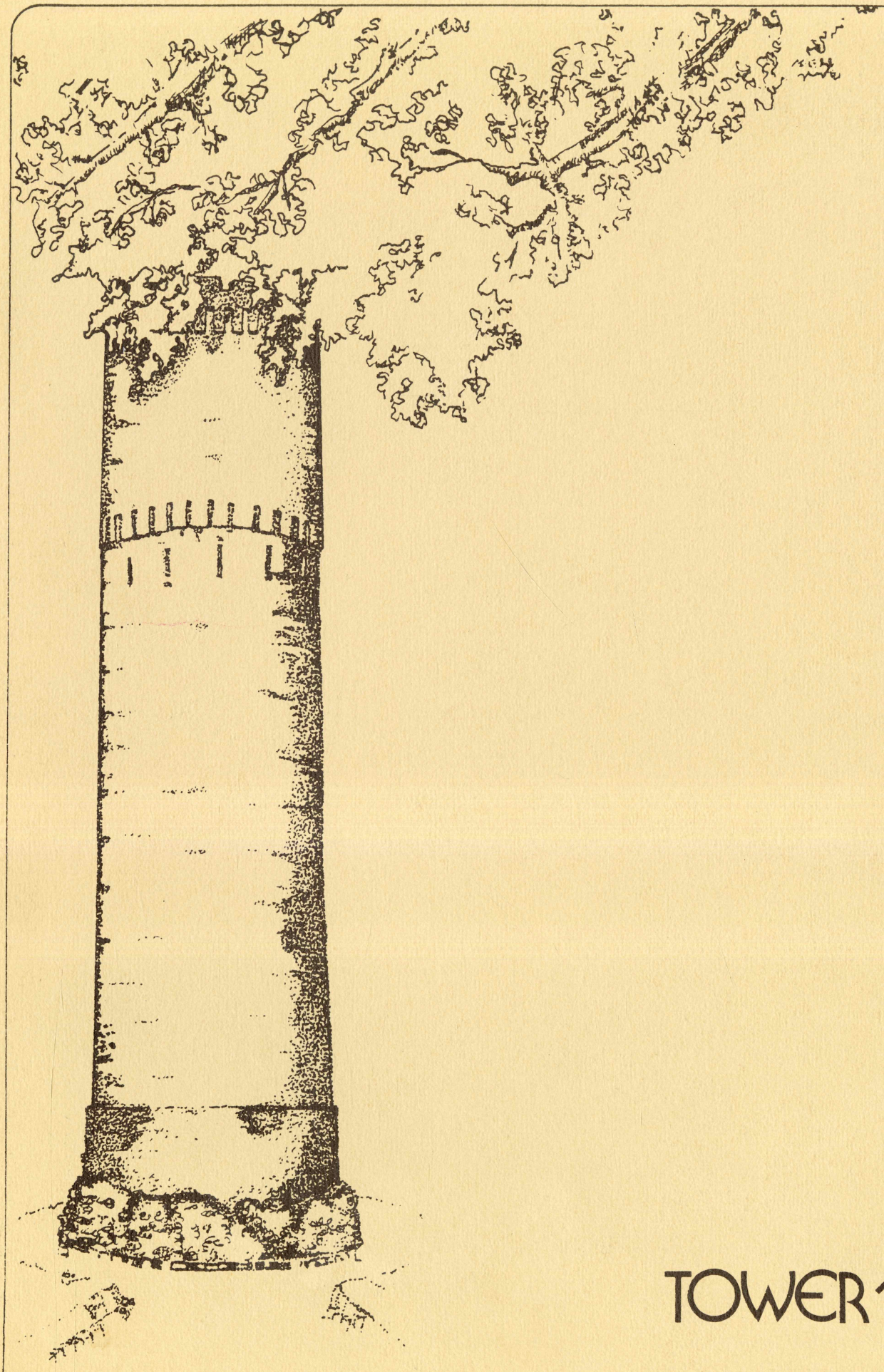

TOWER 1981

Tower/Spring, 1981

University of Montevallo

Creative Publication

Expectations are prejudices.
C. Flanagan

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TOWER 1981
Editor, Jo Denise Mitchell; Consulting Staff & Layout Assistance, Michael Alburl, Jill May; Literary Judges, Mr. Bill Cobb, Mr. Rufus Kinney, Dr. Norman McMillan; Art Judge, Ms. Janice Golojuch; Coordinator, Bill Plott.

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The TOWER, the University of Montevallo's Creative Publication, is published in the Spring of each year by the students of the University with funds provided by the Board of Student Publications and student activity fees.

*Denotes the TOWER AWARD. Recognition and a cash prize are awarded to outstanding works in each category of poetry, prose, and art.
**Denotes honorable mentions.

Like chalk with no board
longing to write
waiting to spill its color
waiting to caress the blackness
of the chalkboard
and make just one line . . .
  my thoughts are continuous . . .
  running
  and waiting
to be written down.

Ed

For Rhonda: With Courage To Be

By Isabella Scavetta

I came by to see you the other night; and, of course, you were out. No matter. I left a note for you, fastened to the doorknocker where I was sure you would see it, provided the knocker didn't turn into one of those goblins I was constantly reading about as a child. Do you remember them . . . the goblins? They lived in dark, lonely houses and would come out at night and hide in the doorknockers, hoping that some stranger, equally lonely, might stop by and knock. I stopped by and knocked; but no one answered. I'll come by some other time — earlier in the afternoon and have tea with you.

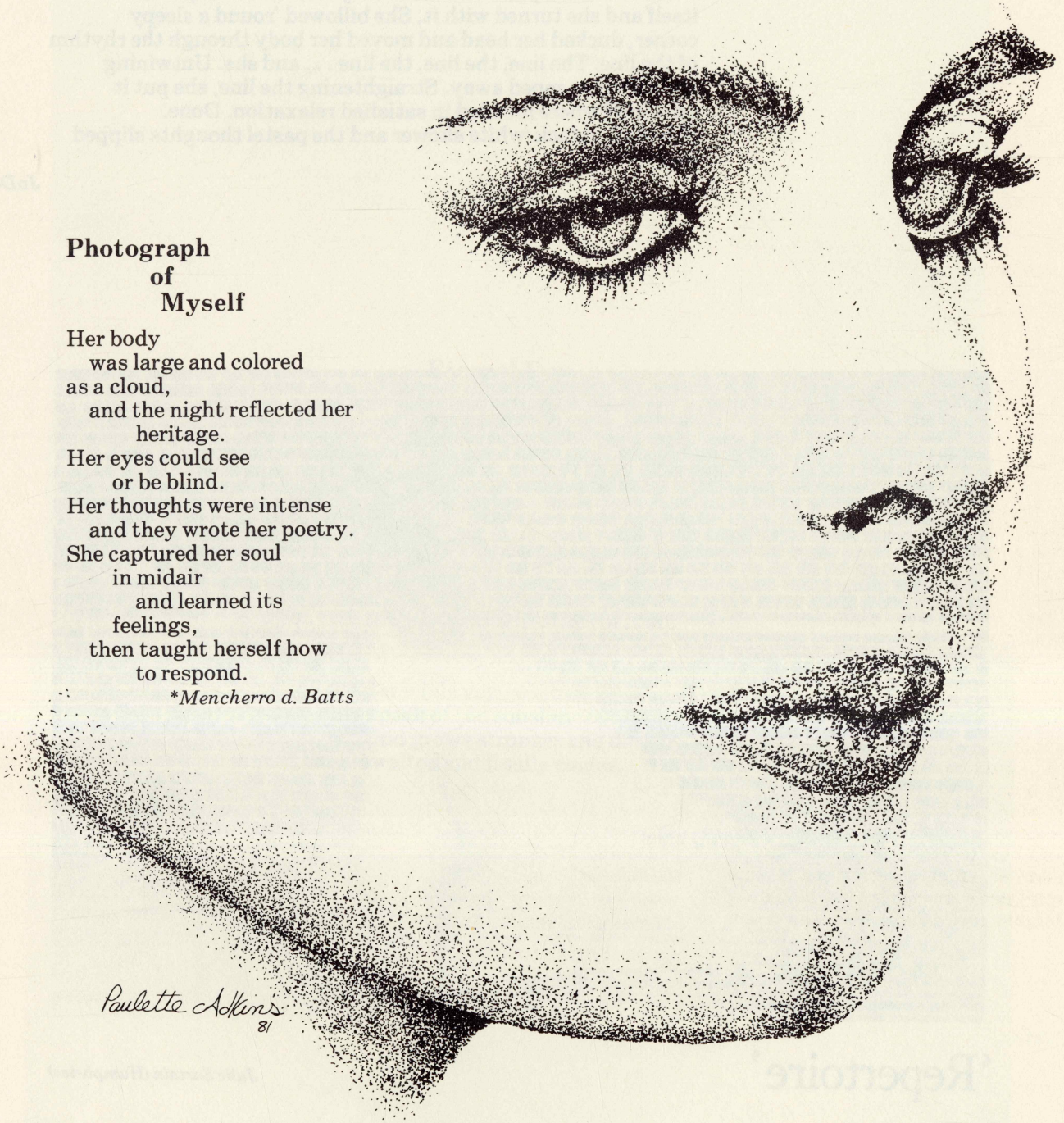
It was quite peculiar what happened to me on my way to here. I was headed for Spain, hearing that doncellas were needed there. I thought I could become one, knowing a bit of Spanish and having read *Don Quiote* twice, once in the original. But my mind boggled on the way. I couldn't remember what day of the week it was; and, suddenly, it became vital for me to know. And then, my ears, full of all kinds of contraptions I'd stuck there for the journey, were hit by a grain of stardust and that boggled my mind even further. I was becoming quite perturbed, trying to remember what day of the week it was and how to get to Spain and how to address knights errant upon first meeting. Fortunately, the moon was bright; so I caught hold of a moonbeam and held on for dear life, hoping that, if I could steady myself for a moment, I'd be able to think clearly. I could never travel and think at the same time. It's a lot like talking and eating, you either can do both at the same time or you can't. I simply can't. But where was I . . . ? Yes: holding onto the moonbeam for dear life. Unfortunately, the moonbeam proved too weak for my weight; so, rather than holding me steady, it began to stretch along with me until I found myself sitting safely in the Big Dipper. It is a safe place to sit, I assure you. So I sat there and steadied myself, until, stationary, I began to think.

It turned out to be no particular day of the week — a rather convenient time for me. And Spain was safely situated on the Iberian Peninsula with no danger of moving any time too soon. With that off my mind, I then began to think of nothing in particular and, consequently, remembered you. You said once I was to drop in if ever in the neighborhood. So I decided to. Although, I must confess, I was no where near your neighborhood at the time. But since I still couldn't recall how to greet knights errant upon first meeting, I decided I'd pop by, knowing you would know such things, knowing all such things.

So I came down, leaving the Big Dipper, passing by running Aries and a few angels out polishing stars. They do do that, you know. You must consider the possibilities carefully — that is, whether you want to spend eternity polishing stars or sitting around a fire. Perhaps the stars would be better. There's always the celestial music to keep one happy while busy polishing. But this is a choice entirely for you to make.

However, not to digress further, what I wanted to say is that, just as I was slowly passing the trees, I saw a leaf fall, before its prime naturally; it fell with the grace of a perfect dancer — as if she were falling in a dream of slow-motion perfection. None of my clumsy crashing about. You should have seen her. She had no qualms about falling, about her prime, about the weather. Only pure grace. I thought of you then and how I wanted you to be in when I came by so that I could tell you that falling is beautiful if you do it gracefully.

Is that what you tried to say to me? You once mentioned fighting windmills. I warned you of the giants they could become and how they could knock you down into the mud and leave you crushed to the ground. You only noted the possibility of being caught on the upswing and tossed to the stars. On my journey back to the moon, after fighting windmills in Spain and being the doncella to knights errant, I'll look for you . . . there . . . among the stars.



Photograph of Myself

Her body
was large and colored
as a cloud,
and the night reflected her
heritage.
Her eyes could see
or be blind.
Her thoughts were intense
and they wrote her poetry.
She captured her soul
in midair
and learned its
feelings,
then taught herself how
to respond.

**Mencherro d. Batts*

And she drew a crooked line. Not curved or a graceful spiral. No smooth connection turning on itself but a wobbly, crooked thing. Bent and angled, sticking sharply here, touching harshly . . . jagged mournful dissonance. Gyrating in uneven rhythm, grating on itself.

And then the pirouette. Startling her, the arc imposed itself and she turned with it. She billowed 'round a sleepy corner, ducked her head and moved her body through the rhythm of the line. The line, the line, the line . . . and she. Untwining herself she stepped away. Straightening the line, she put it on a shelf where it coiled in satisfied relaxation. Done. She took a black/white shower and the pastel thoughts slipped away.

JoDe

'Repertoire'

Julie Sartain (Humphries)

Eternal Day

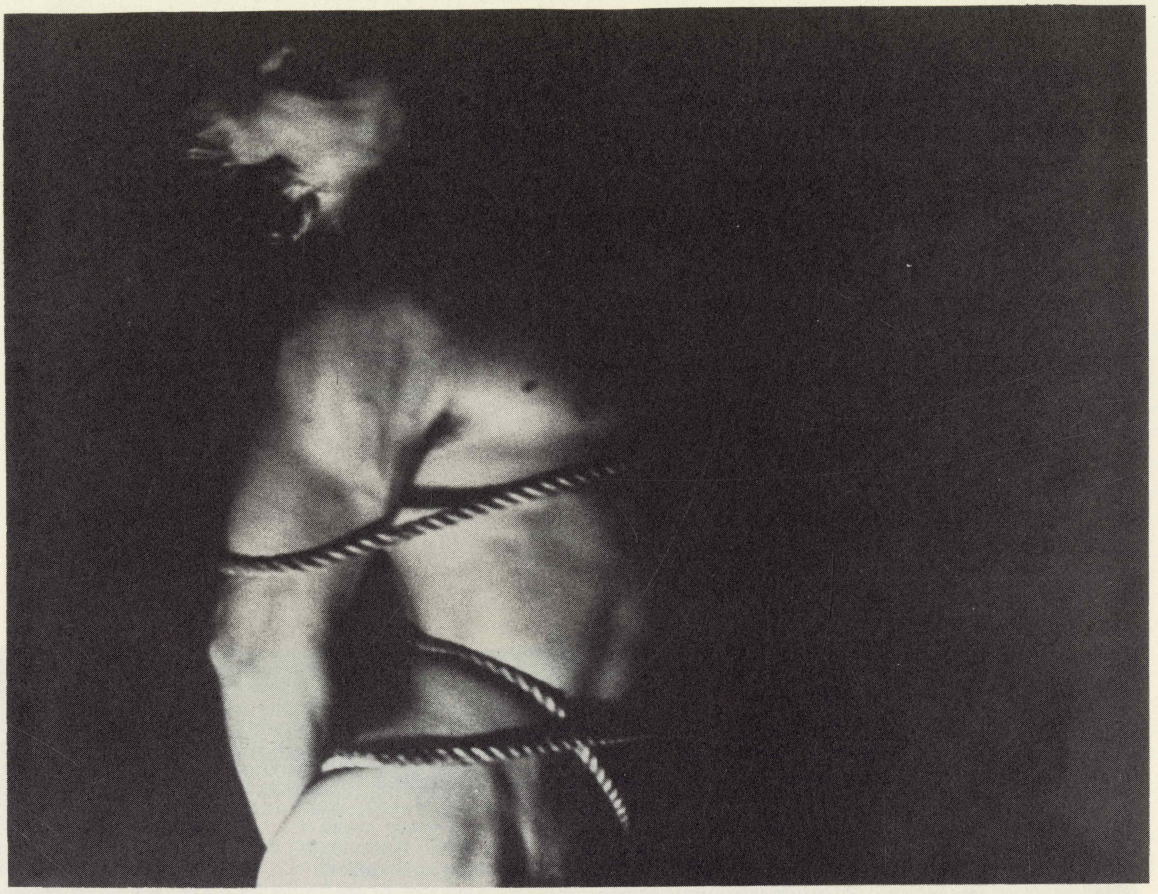
It is morning.
The sun begins to shine and you are beginning.
The world is beautiful, youth takes hold and you realize
The meaning of beauty, love, and happiness.

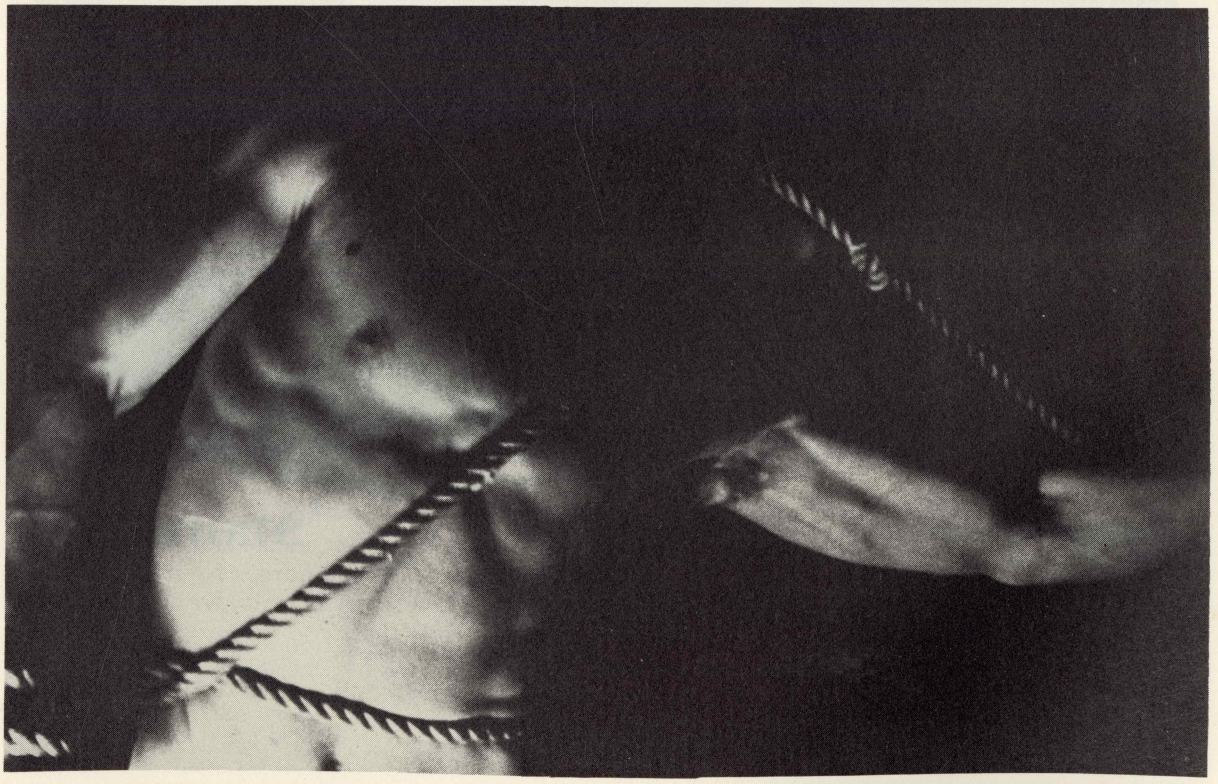
It is mid-day now.
Beauty is fading and love turns to companionship
and happiness is gone.
The cold gray hand of fear strangles the last dream,
and you realize the meaninglessness of it all.

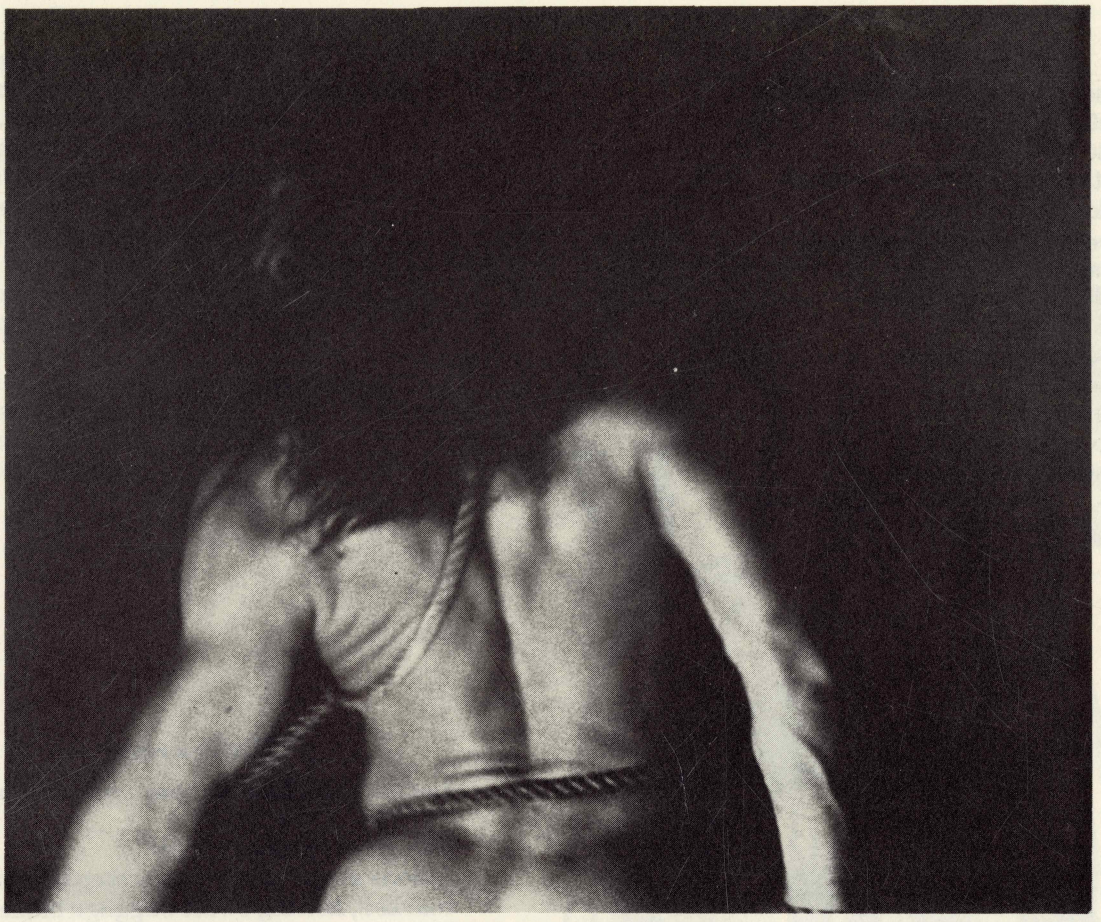
It is evening.
Time goes faster while you go slower.
You can only speak of the sunshine of morning.
The icy cold wind grows stronger and darker
and the long awaited end finally comes.

It is morning.

David Curren







Free Man vs. Society I, II, III

James Knowles

The Thriving Ignorance

Percentages, thoughts, words, feelings, ideas, shit.
People laughing, leering at others in the crowd.
Never knowing or caring how the crowd feels.
What makes them believe and function and live and love and screw
and I get so fed up with laughter — people — behavior.
We as individuals are authoritarian, ethnocentrics in an
agitated state believing we are best, ours is right and yours is
wrong, not because we are sure but because we are convinced.
Surely, ALWAYS, Finally
We choke, we love. we hate
With passion, with numbness, and without cause.

Chuck Richards

The Escape

They pressed hard for the lamb pattern
Vows enacted for true spirit
I crawled to the desert
To escape the rituals of hard pressed
dogmatic minds
I made love with the hallucinogenic
cactus
I felt wonders of the universe
Voices call
With kaleidoscope tongues
And I answered
With the free soul
There is no way to lose
When we step out of control

James Anderson Robertson

Halloween

Let our dark Ladies mourn me tonight.

The spirits passed me by.
Moons away from my doorstep they skipped
masked, hefting sweet baggage home.
Strangeness or sweetness
(Which?
I neither grasped nor tasted.)
passed.

Frances Ford

Untitled

Little girl
that walks around with anger
clenched between your teeth,
where will you be tomorrow?
Life has treated you cruel
and you
have chosen to
spit on it.

Believe me
when I too say
my jaws have held your indignation
with you.

**Mencherro d. Batts*

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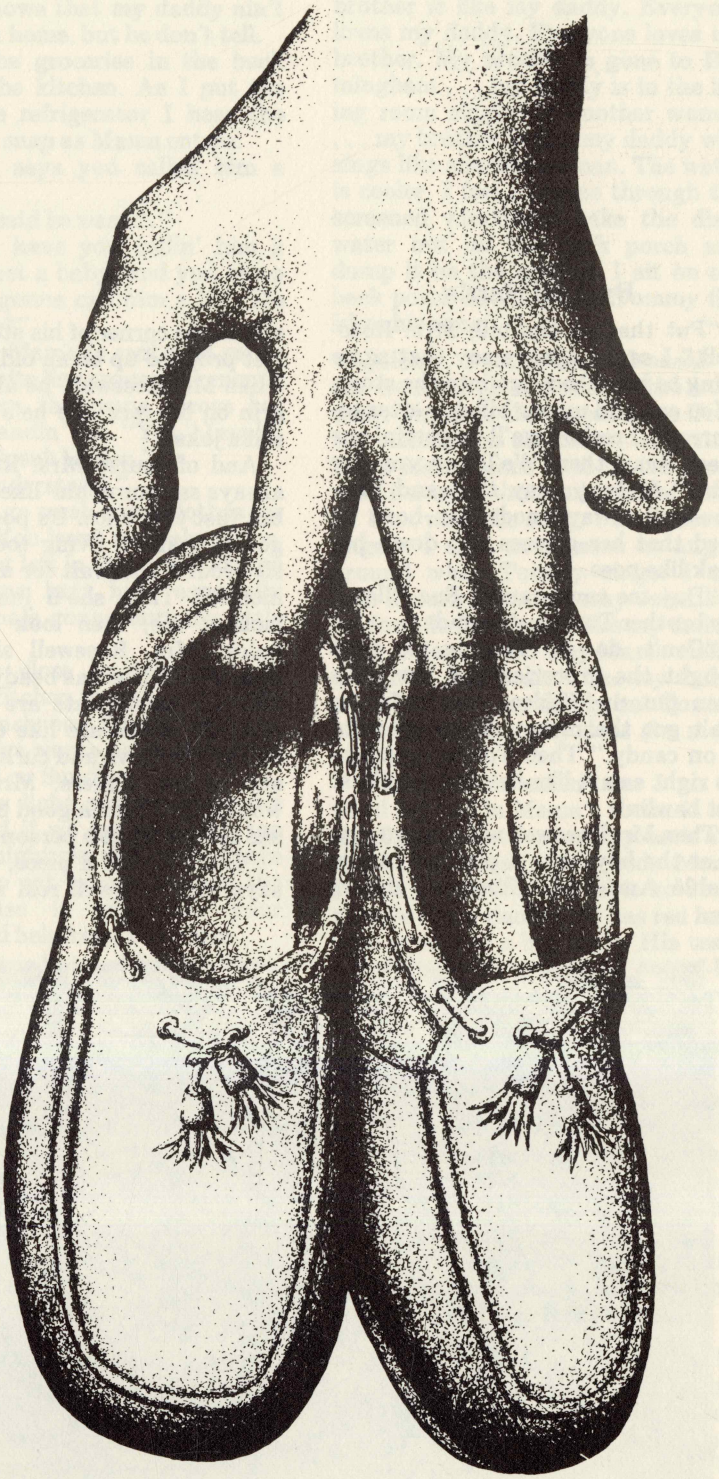
December Day

I got up at noon
not knowing what to do with the morning
spent the evening in the park
kicking pebbles
and watching them splash
into the duck pond
where no ducks remained

I've counted the days left in winter
one less tomorrow

be here when the apple orchard blooms
I'll be waiting by the creek
shoes in hand
ready to go wading.

Isabella Scavetta



Doing It

By Angi Harris

"Put that on the bill, Mrs. Rosewell," I say. I always say that same thing to her when I go into the store. "You can add up our bill day after tomorrow; I reckon we'll be gettin' our check 'bout then. We'll pay you our debt." I always say that and Mrs. Rosewell always nods her head so hard that her glasses slip down her beak-like nose.

"Buy me some candy, Sue Ellen," my brother Tommy demands.

"Can't do it, Tommy. I done bought the groceries and the bill's been put up. 'Sides, you know we ain't got the money to go spendin' it on candy." Then Tommy puckers up right smart like he's goin' to bust out bawlin'.

Then Mr. Rosewell will always say, "Let the boy have a piece of candy, Mable Ann." Mr. Rosewell always sits in the corner of his store with his feet propped up on an old Nehi crate. I like Mr. Rosewell, he always has a grin on his face like he's tellin' himself a joke.

And of course Mrs. Rosewell will always say somethin' like, "All right, but just this once. Us poor folks has got to make a living too. We can't sit around and wait for a check each month." Then she'll just stop and look at me, then look away right quick. Mrs. Rosewell should have been a bird. She has beady black eyes and her movements are real quick. And her hands are like claws. Each nail grows down and curls around the end of her fingers. Mrs. Rosewell would have been a good bird because she lacks a lot as a person.

"Get yourself a piece, Sue Ellen," says Mr. Rosewell real slow like he always does. He talks just like he's choosing each word before it comes out of his mouth, and he wants to taste the sound of them before they hit the air.

I always reply, "No, thank you. I don't care much for sweets." In the meantime Tommy stands near the candy rack torn between a sucker that will last him a while or a chocolate bar that is rich and sweet. Tommy always chooses the chocolate; I would choose the sucker.

"That bag is too big for a slight girl like you. Why don't you have Tommy tote it? He's big as you even if he's just 9 to your 11," says Mrs. Rosewell as I gather up the bag of groceries. Tommy stands near the door and takes bites of his chocolate bar.

"Ma says he's too young to carry heavy things. She says it'll stretch his arms and he'll be crippled when he get's older."

"I suppose your ma knows what's best for ya'll."

We leave the store and enter the bright Southern sunshine. I've heard old folks up in the hills say that the sun don't shine up North like it does here. They say that's why the Yankees talk so fast. I like to hear Yankees talk.

The gravel road is dry and a car passes us. The red dust is stirrin' in the air like it's just lookin' for just the right place to settle. Ma says that there ain't no sense in tryin' to keep a house clean if you live on a dirt road. She says the red dust gets in and everything is dirty again by the time you finish cleanin' and turn around. I reckon Ma is right; she knows.

"I can climb that tree, Sue Ellen," says Tommy. He points to a tall pine on the edge of the road. "I climbed it last year when I was just eight years old. You don't believe I climbed it do you? Say, you don't think I climbed that tree do you?"

Keith Alexander

"If you say you climbed it, Tommy, then I reckon you did. You ought to know if you climbed a tree or not. I never seen you do it, but I reckon you know if you climbed it."

"You don't believe I climbed it. You callin me a liar ain't you, Sue Ellen?"

"I didn't say . . ."

"I'm gonna tell Mama that you called me a liar. I'm gonna tell her right now. Mama! Mama!" Tommy yells as he runs the rest of the way home.

I watch Tommy run. He drops the crumpled candy bar paper on the ground. They say he looks just like our daddy did right before he left to go to work for a construction company in Birmingham. That was four years ago. Daddy had red hair that curled right on top above his forehead. Nobody ever tells but they know. It's like if they never tell, then it never happened. So we play act. We wait for Daddy to come home, only deep down and for real everyone knows he won't come home because he run off with another woman. But everyone loved Daddy so they won't think nothin' bad about him. Sometimes late at night Mama and me will be sittin' on the porch and all of a sudden she'll start tellin' me about how Daddy used to be the best dancer in these parts. He could dance from sundown to sun up and not be ready to quit. And he could sing! Mama says she believed angels in Heaven bent down just to listen to my daddy sing. Then she'll tell how she needs to get some new curtains up in the living room cause the red dust has ruined the old ones. When Daddy comes home we'll kill the rooster and have dressing and maybe a big three layer chocolate cake 'cause Daddy loves chocolate cake. But we ain't got no new curtains yet. It's like if no one ever says it, it didn't ever happen.

Gettin' close to home I see the mail man pulled up at our mailbox. Mama is standin' out by the box just like she always does, rain or shine. She'll be saying, "Mr. Webster, you got a letter from my Johnny Ray? I should have got a letter by now it seems like."

Then the mailman will say, "I ain't got no letter from Johnny Ray today. I'm sure, Mae Nell. I looked twice, nothing here but a advertisement for Higgin's drug store in town. Maybe tomorrow." Then he'll pull off and leave a trail of swirling red dust as Mama walks back to the house. Mr. Webster knows that my daddy ain't comin' back home, but he don't tell.

I take the groceries in the back door into the kitchen. As I put the eggs in the refrigerator I hear the screen door snap as Mama enters.

"Tommy says you called him a liar."

"I never said he was . . ."

"I won't have you callin' him a liar. He's just a baby, and you or no one else is gonna call him a liar. Do you hear me?"

I can tell Mama is real mad cause she has a white line around her mouth and the vein that runs across her temple is standin' out. "Yes," I reply.

"What? Speak louder."

"Yes, I understand."

"I got to go wash some clothes for tomorrow. You leave my baby alone. He's all I got left in this world and no one is gonna hurt him, especially ain't no female gonna hurt my little man."

Mama is close to tears as she leaves the kitchen to walk out to the porch to wash our Sunday clothes. Mama always wants us to look good for the Lord on Sunday.

I fix us a light supper cause it's real hot and if we eat anything too greasy we might get sick. Mama says it is best to eat greasy food in the winter cause it will coat your stomach and help keep you warm.

But now it is hot and I don't want to do the dishes. "Mama, can Tommy do the dishes tonight? I did them all last week."

"I ain't gonna sit here and listen to your complainin'. Tommy's got to practice singing for church tomorrow. He's going to sing in front of the whole church. Tommy sings just like your daddy."

Mama goes into the living room and gets out the old Baptist Hymnal. Its covers are worn off and the first and last few pages are curlin' at the corners. I hear Tommy singin' as I go into the kitchen with the dirty dishes.

Standin' in front of the sink with my hands in the dirty, hot water, I can feel the sweat run down my back in little rivers. The heat makes me dizzy as I slosh the water over the dishes. Some suds run over the sides of the sink and land on my bare, dust covered feet. I must clean up tonight because tomorrow is the Lord's Day. I can hear Tommy singin' in his sweet, clear voice. His voice is like my daddy's voice. My daddy has gone to work in Birmingham. My brother is like my daddy. Everyone loves my daddy. Everyone loves my brother. My brother is gone to Birmingham . . . my daddy is in the living room singin' to another woman . . . my brother is like my daddy who sings like another woman. The water is cooler. I feel a breeze through the screened window. I take the dishwater out on the back porch and dump it on the ground. I sit on the back porch and listen as Tommy finishes his song.

Quickly, I jump up and sneak to the front porch and peek in the front door. Through the screen I see Tommy standin' on the coffee table singin' as Mama leans back on the couch with her eyes shut and her feet keepin' beat with the song. I don't see no angels. I ain't never seen no angels around when Tommy sings. I can hear a crack in his squeaky voice, and he don't look so much like my daddy. Why, I don't know why Mama makes over him so. He ain't like my daddy one bit. I love my daddy but Tommy ain't my daddy; why does she make over him so?

I hear Mama callin' me. I go toward my bed in Mama's room. It is a small cot. I have taken my bath and now I am ready for bed. Mama stands at her dressin' table holdin' a picture of my daddy. He has red hair, blue eyes, and a big smile. His teeth are white and even except one of his front teeth has a small chip, but you don't notice the chipped place.

"Kiss your daddy goodnight, Sue Ellen," my Mama says. "He'll be home soon and we'll all be happy again." She pushes the picture toward me, and I lean forward to touch it with my lips. I can see the chipped tooth. Mama takes the picture to her bed and lays it on the pillow next to her head. I lay in my small cot and try to sleep. Mama is talkin' in her sleep. She is callin' for Daddy.

Sunday is the Lord's Day. The little church is crowded with people. We sit on the third pew. Mama sits real proud with Tommy beside her. Tommy gets up to sing his song. He don't have no angels around him. I don't see no angels around my brother's head. He ain't my brother; he's a devil. Tommy finishes his song, and everyone is smilin' real big, especially Mama. Mama looks like she's gonna bust right out of her skin she's smilin' so big.

After church, everyone crowds around Tommy to tell him how good he sings. The preacher says he's a fine young man. The preacher don't know that Tommy is a devil.

It is Sunday afternoon, and Mama is at a neighbor's. Tommy wants me to play baseball.

"I ain't gonna play no baseball. Its too hot and my head is a hurtin'."

"If I had a head like that, it would hurt too. It hurts 'cause you're so ugly, Sue Ellen. Mama says you're ugly. She says I'm her baby."

Tommy throws the baseball at me. It crashes into the dresser table. The picture of my daddy falls and breaks; the glass rips my daddy's face.

"See what you done? You can't even catch a baseball. I'm gonna tell, Sue Ellen. I'll tell Mama."

I didn't cut my daddy's face. I didn't even chip his tooth. Mama is mad at me; the vein is stickin' out on her forehead and her mouth is white. Mama screams and hits me with her fists. Over and over again she hits me. Then I lay on the floor and try to crawl under the bed to get away from her. She picks up the picture and cries. Tommy pats her shoulder, and I lay under the bed and fall asleep.

Tommy and me go to hunt blackberries this mornin'. Mama's eyes were still red and puffy before we left, but she didn't try to hit me again.

We get to Carlin's Cliff. It looks like half-mountain and half-hill, like God couldn't decide which one He wanted. Down below the cliff are lots of rocks and stubby little pine trees. It is a long way down.

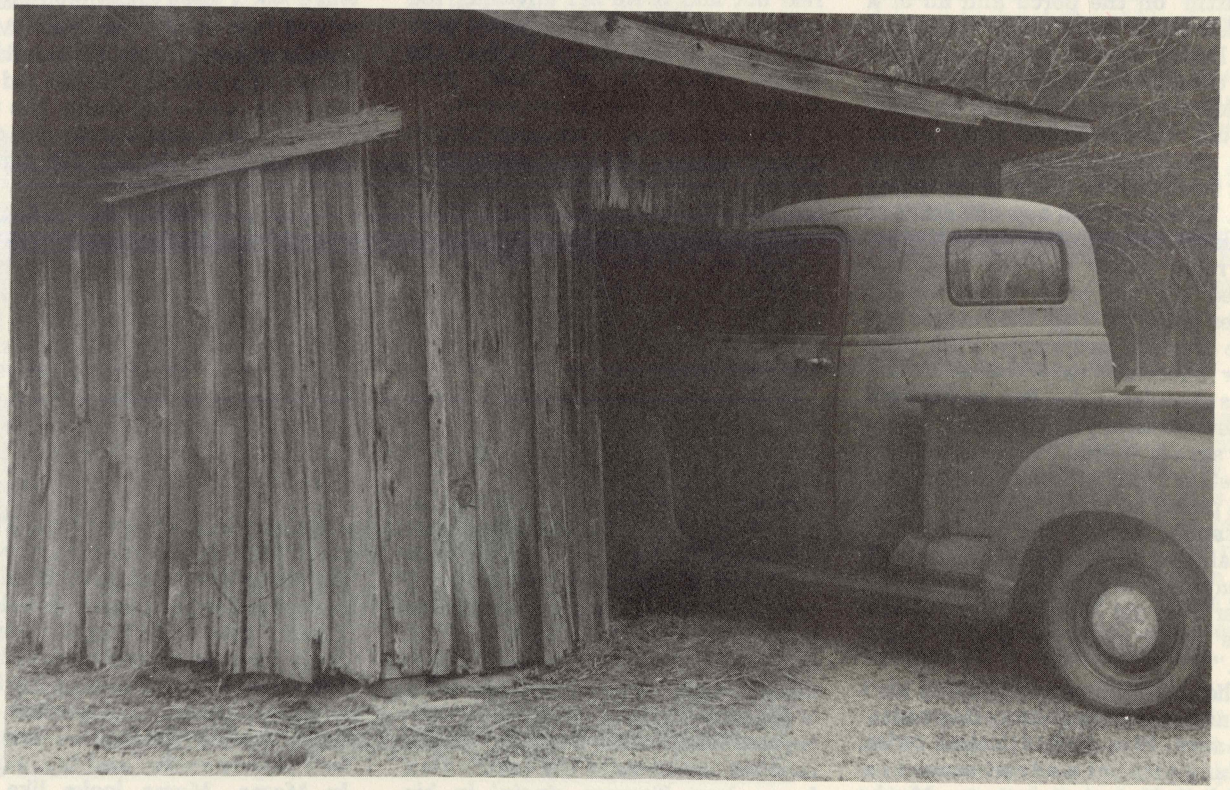
"I never get a beatin' like you. You got bruises all over your face. You look like you ain't washed your dirty face in six months cause of them bruises," Tommy brags. I don't like to hear him brag. Tommy ain't no angel. My face hurts; Tommy hurts me. He's just like my daddy; everyone says he's just like my daddy. But my daddy ain't no devil.

"I can do anything I want to," brags Tommy.

"Can you fly like an angel, Tommy?" I ask. "Can you?"

I try to help Tommy fly, but he can't do it. He wasn't no angel; I knew he weren't no angel cause angels can fly. He was a devil. I hate devils. I wonder could my daddy fly?

The rain is fallin' in a drizzle around the graveside. The red dust is red mud. I don't know if Mama is cryin' or if it is the rain on her face. I ain't cryin' or talkin'. They all say that Tommy was a good boy. They didn't know. I wonder who will sing at church now? Maybe they will let me sing when I start talkin' again. Too bad that Mama lost Daddy and Tommy, but now she can love me. Mama knows that Tommy weren't no angel, but she ain't gonna tell cause if you don't tell it's like it never happened. I wonder if they'll let me sing at church? Mrs. Rosewell said that I been affected in a mighty powerful way. She says that the shock of Tommy fallin' over that cliff took away my voice. She said that I could be actin', though. I just look at Mrs. Rosewell; I don't like her much. She should have been a bird. One of these days I'm goin' to walk up to her and say, "Mrs. Rosewell, you reckon you could fly like a bird?" I might even help her.



Pap Paw's Truck

Jim Hughes

As we die on cold winded days
drug-influenced visions carry
our concentration beyond here,
beyond now.
What is the purpose
of our silliness?

Tears crying for a touch
of purity
will remain undried until
the ultimate truth.

We cannot hold purity
but lose it like a
digested beer.
Men drown their spirits
that have never been thirsty.

All die in cold winded moments
of witless decisions.

High . . . spirit . . . higher
Scream out from your poisoned containment.
Cast away the soft covering.
See the clear visions-truths?

A universal Strength shall
save you
as you already know (always knew).
And on cold winded days
it shall live.

lighten.
purify.
know.

priscilla

Lost Monk in City Rain (For P.R.)

I have come in and out of rain
and through rain
my rice bowl washed clean
except for a few kernels determined
to adhere to the rim

my feet soaked soft
my white robe grey

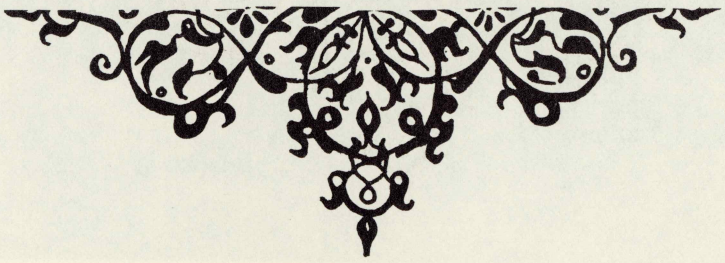
no heads turn to look at me

the traffic passes in swishes
and splashes
that roar off the tenement houses . . .
the honking of horns bounces back
like so many balls of noise
being tossed about by school children
running free through city streets

it's november rain
not the rain of april
of daffodils
the silhouetted trees stand bare
sheltering no one
here and there along the sidewalks

a door opens onto a corridor
of hushed silence
the rain stops
chills scatter from head to toe
and eyes slowly adjust to the dimly lighted cold
of the stone world of prayer.

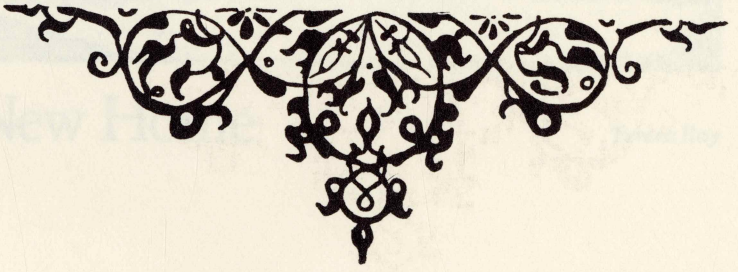
Isabella Scavetta



October's Full Moon

Sometimes, late at night when the moon shines brightly
Upon the earth, throwing long shadows along my path,
And my breath comes out as a mist, glowing,
In tune with the night,
All is dreamlike, fantastic as it is real,
The Earth Children dancing, their spirits free
As life is free to one who chooses it and sees
The Magic of the Night.
The sounds are rich and vibrant, echoing as they will
When the rushing sounds of mad men are once more stilled,
Leaving Earth to again restore Her troubled Spirit.
And if the mortals should wake from their
Zombie grave-digging labours, they too
Could stand still, breathing deep, sensing Life
and be
Refreshed as the Earth must soon be left still
To regather Her children under Her battered wings,
And no longer confused by those who would
Trample Her soft flowers,
She could again laugh Her earth song,
And love us back to Life.

Michael Alburl



A Good Man Is Hard to Find

By Natalie Jill May

I was talking with my dear friend Rachael the other day, and I said, "Rachael! Where are the real men nowdays? What ever happened to gallantry, chivalry, and men with true grit? All I ever run into these days are men who are terminally adolescent!"

And Rachael said, "Jenny! What happened to the Golden Girl? I've never met anyone with luck as good as yours. It can't be that bad."

"Oh, but it is. I've decided to give up on men altogether. I don't know why I've been wasting precious time anyway. I should be doing constructive things like learning Swahili folk dances or improving my vocabulary."

Oh, young Jenny," my friend re plied, "Do you know what your problem is? You're unrealistic."

"But all my other friends have found men who please them. How do they do it? Where do they look? All I want is a good, honest man. Is that too much to ask?"

Rachael paused for a moment, and then she began: "Let's see. All you want is a good, honest man . . . A man who doesn't drink himself under the table every weekend, or use the word "shit" in place of commas. Someone who is taller than you, even in heels, and doesn't wear rimless, round glasses — oh, and he shouldn't be *too* overweight or *too* skinny . . . anything in between will do. A person who plays acid rock or new wave punk wouldn't be quite your style — but there must be guys who like Dan Fogelburg, Burl Ives, Rachmaninoff? He should like dogs, children, and Don Quixote. And he should feel that women ought not to be drafted. He should make a comfortable living, you know, be able to afford a small house . . . with two fireplaces . . . a deck . . . bay window . . . and the two of you should be able to travel now and again. But he can't be too materialistic or overly ambitious. That could make a man unscrupulous. No, your man should have a vision . . . a dream! Something he believes in . . . to live and die for! But you will have first priority in his life — yes, he ought to feel that you are most important, after all . . . except for God, of course, because your man will be a Christian. And he should have a flair for being creative — a love for the arts and the finer things of life. He should be someone you can read with and discuss literature, philosophy, and the theory of time travel as well as Ratty and Mole from *The Wind in the Willows*. The two of you will search for magic wardrobes and unicorns and hobbits that hide under the bed. Yes, he should be tender, warm, sensitive, loving, intelligent, humble, sincere, doting, charming, shy, witty, wise and wonderful — someone to spoil you rotten! Just someone to enjoy the simple joys of life . . . like drinking hot tea on a chilly evening . . . by the fireplace . . . in a little country cottage . . . in London."

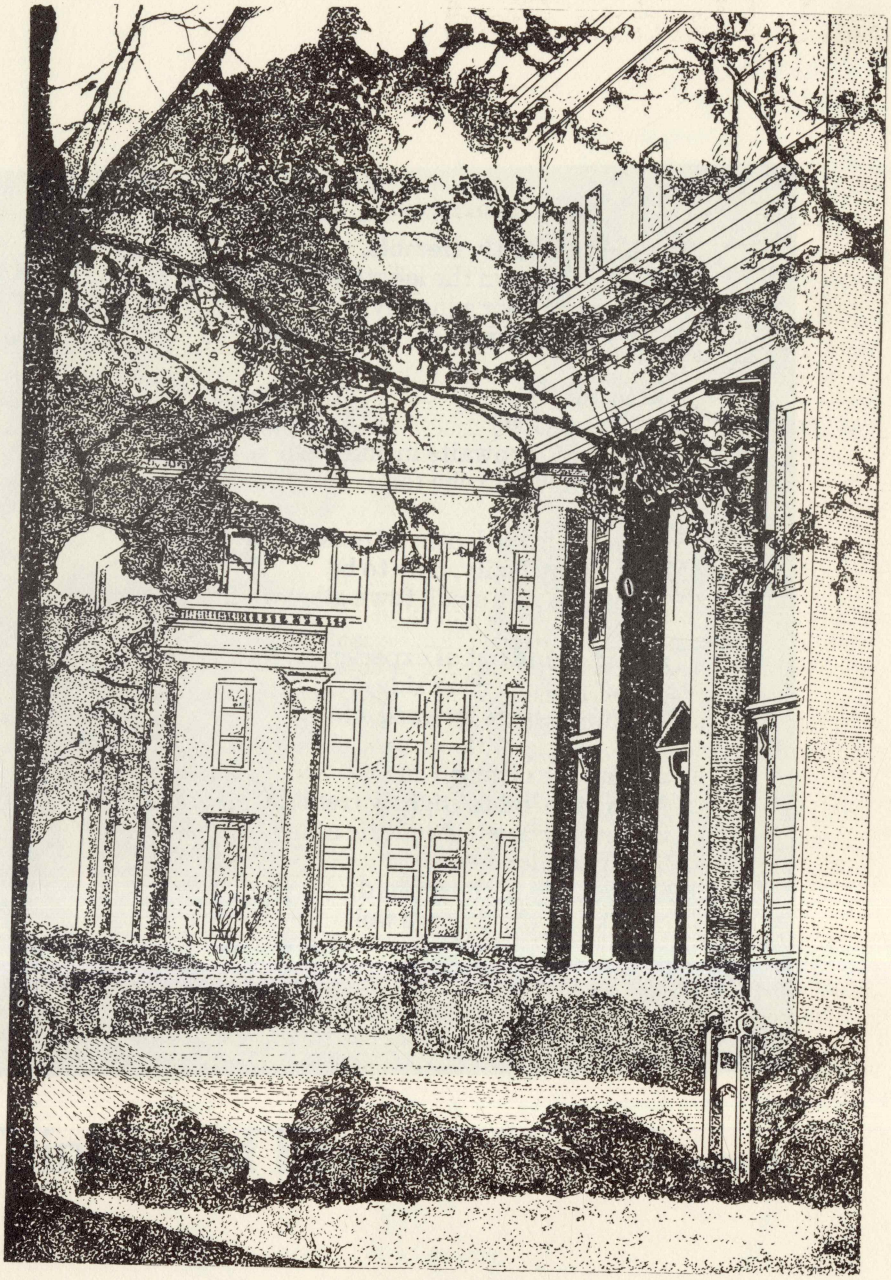
"Yes! Yes! That's him — exactly what I want, give or take a few things," I say.

"Not *too* particular, are you, Jenny?"

"Rachael, you're making fun of me. You don't think I'm being realistic at all. God only knows where I'd find a man like that. I guess he's just an impossible dream."

"Yes," Rachael said, smiling. "And when you find him, ask him if he's got a friend."

Dedicated to Martha, Mary, and Lisa . . . and the very special young men who will make their own particular dreams come true. And especially for my own Knight in Shining Armor.



My New Home

Teresa Ray

Corners

The lights slightly tremble,
Descending down the length of the fabric,
Landing the floor squarely,
To race around from corner to corner.

God in one,
Love in another,
Responsibility awaits in another,
And happiness in one too.

Sprung up from depths of rocky crust,
My ideas lay lazily, only to be
Propped up on a small town alley wall.

Tracing in and out of experience,
Seeing time on either side,
But true feelings forward and aft.

Life hits the ceiling,
Making the lights slightly tremble,
Descending down the fabric of my face,
Ending in a long box,
Put squarely in the ground.
I now know my corners well.

Glenn Smith

Thinking of Egypt II

James Knowles

Soft Control

Cary me down on soft
Maiden soul
To the edge of dawn
Bring in the creatures
Not to kill
Not to harm
We will conquer
With soft control
Carry my love
In tender time
In tender thought

James Anderson Robertson

Spring Reality

It was a spring evening and it had just rained a good shower.
Lovers were out walking hand in hand in the moonlight.
I needed someone to love,
someone I could hold, laugh, and cry with,
but,
I had no one, just no one.
I begged, pleaded, and sobbed, and no one listened.
I saw someone in the distant mist.
I wanted to talk to her, but she saw no one and left.
Now I understand.
Someone: She is like the mist.
No one: She is like the rain.
The mist makes dreams appear, but the rain makes life appear.

David Curren

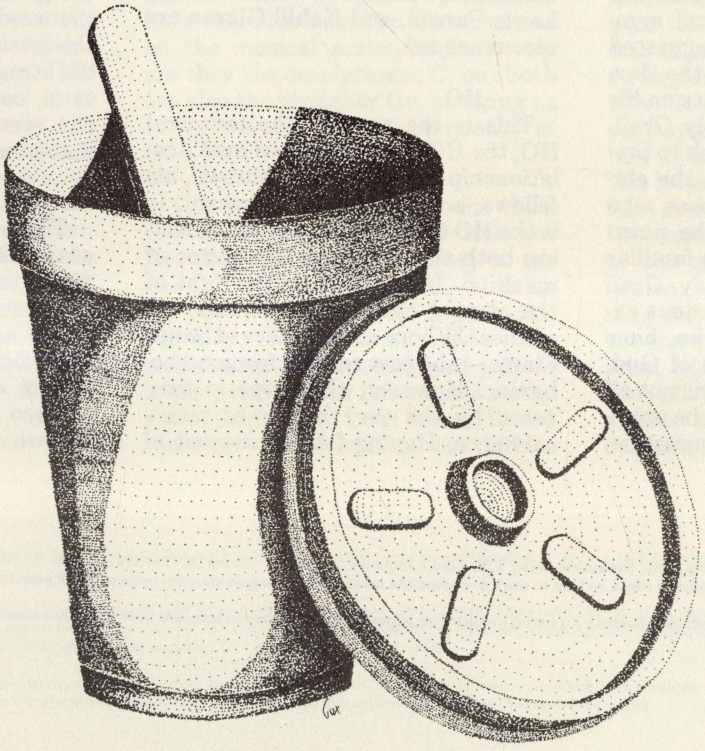
Coffee, to go

Have it here
And remember all the times
You sat in that very chair
And she sat right there

And you didn't even suspect
You weren't in love, or know —

What'll it be?
One coffee, to go.

David Knox



pect of the echo, reflecting the theory of entrophy.[3] But most importantly, it is the omnipresent C of Allen's theory of the All Pervasive Harmony.[4] As such, it has a dual function. It is, first of all, the inner eye with which we see. It is the angle of viewpoint that we hold, all pervasive and yet unique, as illustrated by the medicine circle of the Indians.[5] However, it is also the ocean of life — the sea we travel on in our journey back to the eternal God. It is both the water of our baptism and our death by drowning, for the second HO must be water.[6] The H and the O, although apparently diverse, form a unified and unique whole. The uniqueness and similarity of these two elements is further illustrated by their position on the musical scale; for, not only are they the omnipresent C, but both are also the almighty Gs, bringing us to the eternal and unique quality of God.[7]

HO

This in turn leads us to the third HO which is the spiritual HO, the HO that brings man to God, to the eternal. Being the third HO, it holds the power of the trinity. It embodies the holy, the hosanna that is completed with the harrowing of hell. It is the paradox; for it becomes a step in the ladder that both descends and ascends.[8] In ascending, the ladder leads us back to eternity, no longer with HO's but with OH's — the paradox of ecstasy and pain as mankind struggles through eternity into eternity. It is, through all of this, the very symbol of eternity. Both the letters H and O symbolize the eternal. The letter H reflects the link between man and God,[9] while it also embodies the eternal in being the eighth letter of the alphabet.[10] The letter O, of course, is the circle, with no beginning nor end, the perfect symbol of the eternal. In being the very embodiment of eternity, this HO becomes the all pervading happiness that awaits us when we, too, become united with the eternal entity.

[3]See C. A. **Flanagan's** retort to this reference to the Theory of Entrophy: "How Does An Eternal Sound Diminish?" in *Christian Science Quarterly*, Volume 8, December 1980.

[4]This is calculated as follows: Beginning with the omnipresent C of Allen's Harmony, we have CDEFGABCDEFGABCDEFG. H, being the eighth letter of the alphabet, counting from A, is associated with the eighth note of the scale: C. O, being the fifteenth letter of the alphabet, counting from A, is associated with the fifteenth note of the scale: another C. From this, HO is associated with the omnipresent C of Allen's theory of Harmony.

[5]In the medicine circle of the Indians, individuals, sitting in a circle, describe the object in the middle of the circle. Each held a unique yet equally valid view of that object. Only by combining each of the viewpoints could a true totality be obtained. It is this omnipresent C that the second HO holds.

[6]H_2O

[7]**To** calculate this, one must begin counting from Z, the last letter of the alphabet. As such, H is the nineteenth letter of the alphabet and O is the twelfth. Starting with C of the musical scale, the twelfth and nineteenth notes are both Gs. This harmony which exists between H and O is virtually indestructible since the two letters, H and O, are precisely seven letters apart. The numerical significance of 7 is clearly illustrated here.

[8]
HO
HO
HO

[9]With the letter H, the two parallel lines symbolize God and man, while the middle line forms the link between the two.

[10]Eight (8) is another symbol for eternity when written on its side as such: ∞

Shattered Dream

Jim Hughes

You Had Fun With Ragged Edges

I received your letter today
So you had a good time.
My mind is a puzzle of a thousand pieces and you had fun
My life is a jigsaw and I wonder if the pieces will ever fit
into place — some of them have been chewed by the dog and are
ragged, misshapen, out of place, longing to fit — longing to
be happy. If not happy then just quite not so sad.
But you had a good time. It was fun, I brightened your day.
Well, when the hell does mine get brightened . . . When do I
have fun . . . today, tomorrow, next year, 30th century
In this life?
But never mind my sanity, my life
You had fun . . . I rot in my own hell, my own prison . . .
But is it really mine . . . You created it, you deserve credit.
Blurry lines, bitten pieces, ragged edges . . .
You had fun
I know that the puzzle will never be complete
Some of the pieces are gone, lost. But maybe, just maybe with time
and a lot of luck I'll be able to shape another puzzle
with different pieces and without ragged edges and then I'll
have a good time . . . I might even have fun.

Chuck Richards

Fred Frost's Earthly Blues for the Lady Singer

I play the appropriate fills,
Provide the tasteful bass,
Rock in rhythm to the lilt,
The lilting lines
and your pace.

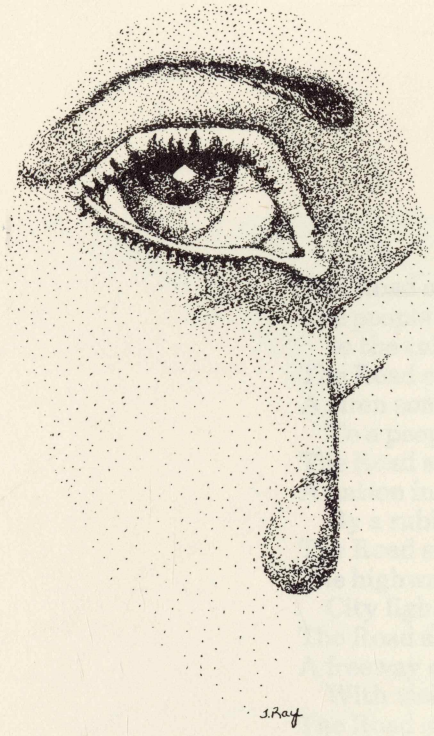
The message is cool pop
And the background is image blues
We all got a stance,
We all got a stance,
But you got a swagger.

I guess I know you better than anyone around
'Cause when the gig is up
You come back down.

And back down is me
And beneath me is us
And beneath me seems to be the only place
We stand equal anymore.

And once
For once, I wish
I had your swagger,
Miss.

David Knox



(Tears on an upright . . . for Bill Evans)

from the corner of my eye
i watched
and waltzed
Gliding in time
Sliding in tune
Rocking with the roll
Of fingers
And soul

discovering syncopation
even in life cycles, yet
Loving a friend and leaving a friend
i only just met

and today in my car
on an
early-morning
radio,
from the corner of my eye,
the music starts to flow.

David Knox

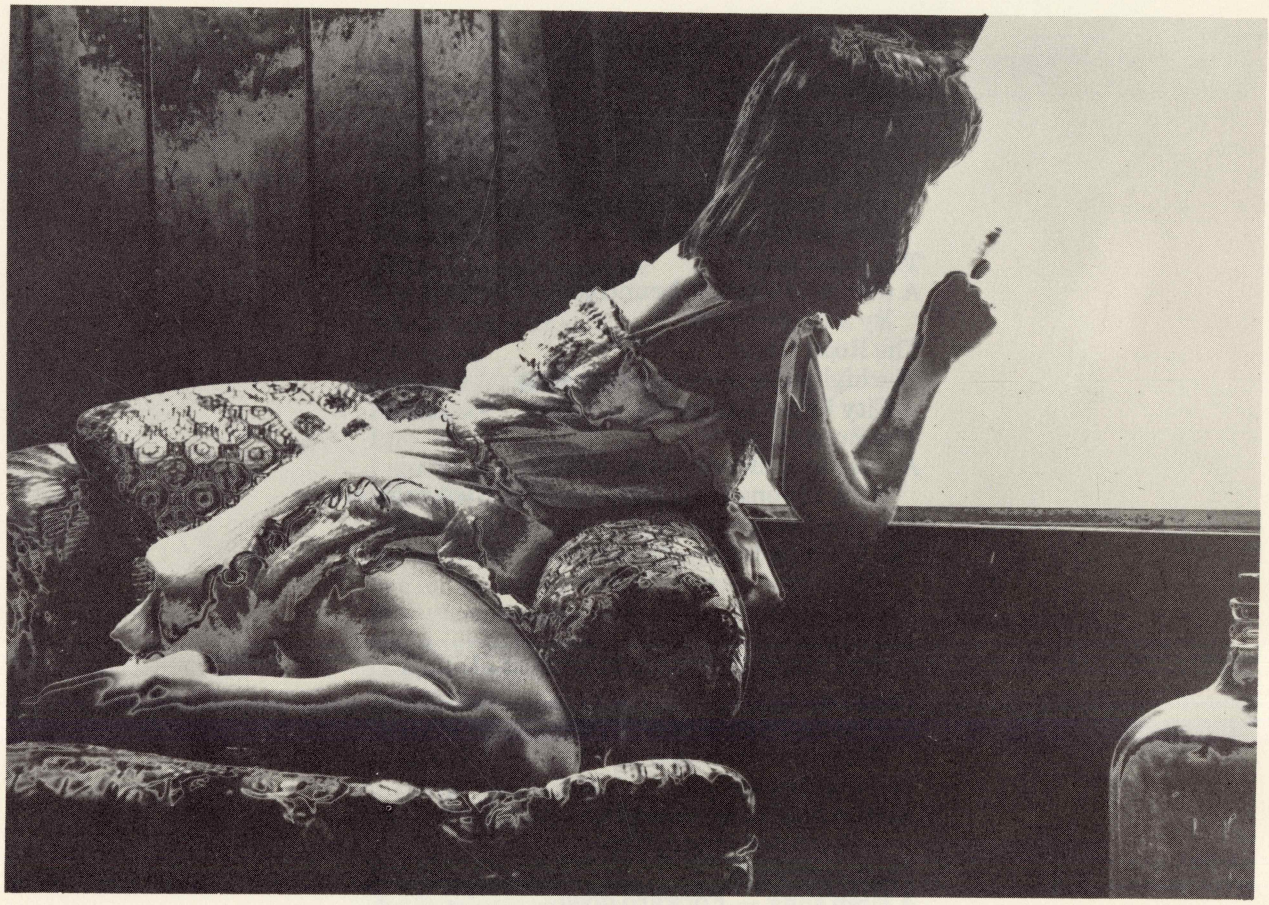
I am dying
lying in the street bleeding
No, the bed
bullet in my head
another lie
Wrists cut
And blood flowing freely
Toward death
What I have fought for
I move to it eagerly
Blood tastes of salt
like tears
I shall miss the sunshine
Rainbows
Life
I shall miss you
Will you notice my absence?
I dreamed a death of romance
Something sweeter than a dirty room
in a lonely motel
with clean sheets on the bed
Not anymore
Death knows the number on the door
The Bible on the table
Silently damns me
Is life worth dying
Is dying worth living
I give the riddle to you
Find your solution
I embrace mine
But is mine a solution
Or a greater question.

Nadine Antaillia

The Road Sings

The Road sings
The people listen and rise
to the call of adventure.
The Road sings
A siren song, a lorelei lullaby
To a people on wheels.
The Road sings
A nation in motion, bound to its lifeblood
By a rubber hose.
The Road sings
The highways beckon, promising
City lights and gaslight nights
The Road sings
A freeway cadence, mesmerizing
With visions of sophisticated, citified wonders.
The Road sings
The Byways hum — the drone
of peaceful, pastoral pleasures.
The Road sings
The countryside draws — magnetic
With the hint of fresh forest and glen.
The Road sings
And no resistance meets from
The populace bound by Marley's chains.
The Road sings
And onward goes a people rendered powerless
— Addicted to propulsion.
The Road sings
A siren song — Forward goes
A nation beggared by internal combustion.

Martha McClendon



Looking Out at a Blank World

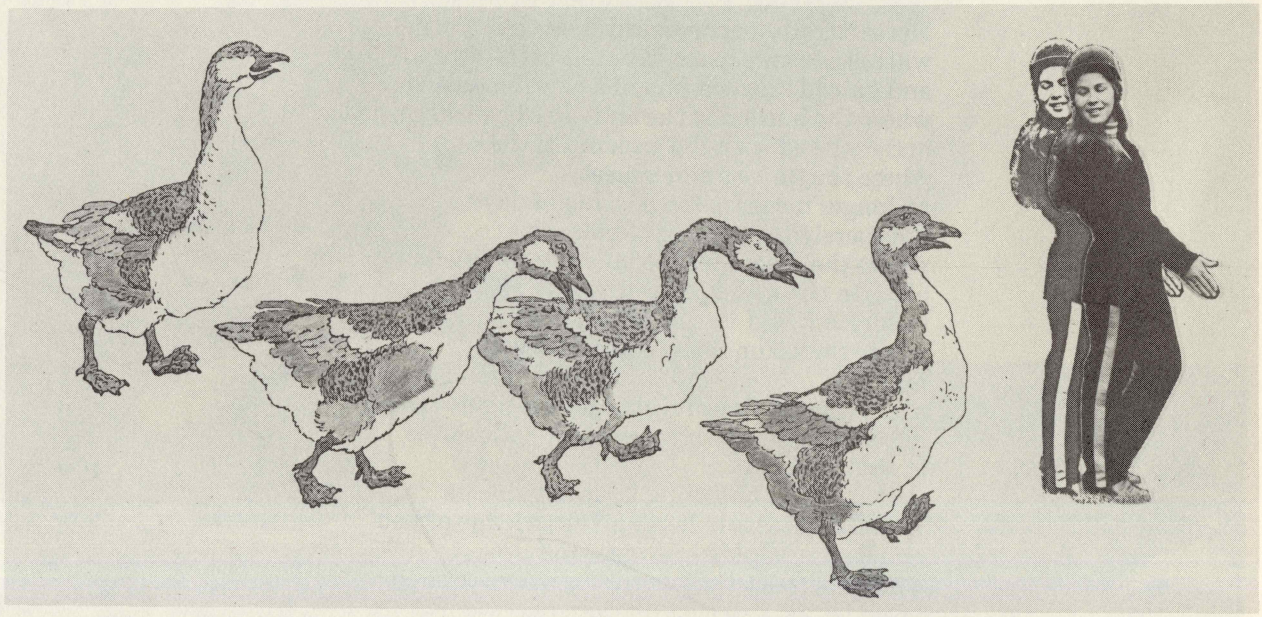
Vonda Schrader

Prayer For A Safe Passage

Hereafter in a better world than this
I shall desire more love and knowledge of you.
As You Like It (I ii 296-7)

Hereafter in a better world than this
where time and space have left off all fears
and gained the meaning of a new dimension
where the burden of the body has been discarded
and replaced with the freedom of the soul
where the sunrise and sunset
no longer measure the passing of days
but merely the coming of moments
where the dream will be for us to complete
alone in the world of the dreamer . . .
in such a world
where the razor-sharp blade of death
is lost
and the relativity of right and wrong
is given to those who care not for absolutes
in such a world
with only the unending hour to guide us
I shall desire more love and knowledge of you
and insist that the one true God
who must see us safely through here to there
provides us with that one iota of ecstasy
we must rightly know
hereafter in a better world than this.

Isabella Scavetta



'Gathering Geese for My Goosedown Quilt'

Julie Sartain (Humphries)

Patches of memories come together
and make a warm blanket
for me to rest on.
Threads of laughter and blocks of love
refresh me.

Many roads my eyes have seen
and my ears have echoed countless voices.
I love the crystal drops of experience
that I dance around as I listen
to the music of my life.

It takes but a glance at precious memories
and I am calmed.
I know the past has been
a beautiful walk.
I am ready to go on
to meet my tomorrows . . .
with my patchwork quilt
held tightly in my hands.

Ed

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